



Press Release

California Department Of Transportation

District 8 464 West 4th Street San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist8>

03-153

November 4, 2003

Contact:

Ivy Estrada

Public Information Officer

(909) 383-4359 or (909) 553-9152

FIRE TRUCKS RECEIVE CALTRANS VEHICLE INSPECTION BEFORE RETURNING HOME

SAN BERNARDINO – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is providing additional support for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and fire departments by performing vehicle inspections. Now that much of the fire is under control, out-of-state fire fighters can begin their return home. For the past few days, Caltrans Vehicle Shop mechanics from District 7 (LA region) and District 8 (San Bernardino area) have been busy performing vehicle inspections and repairs.

Since Saturday, Caltrans has inspected more than 540 fire trucks from California Department of Forestry and other fire protection agencies. Firefighters and their vehicles came from as far away as New Mexico, Lake Tahoe and Arizona. Before they are released to go home, they will get their tires, brakes, lights, and front-end suspensions checked and even repaired, if needed. Caltrans will continue this each day from 6 a.m. to midnight until all fire trucks have been inspected.

Caltrans staff has been working round-the-clock since the fires broke out more than a week ago. During the fires, Caltrans primary responsibility has been to keep roads clear so that fire-fighting teams could have access. This meant clearing rocks, trees and debris from the highways and pulling disabled vehicles out of the roadway so fire trucks could pass through. Caltrans maintenance stations were kept open round-the-clock so there would be additional power and fuel supplies available to fire personnel.

The additional assistance being provided by Cal-Trans to inspect the fire vehicles is also appreciated. "Our focus is on returning people to their homes as soon as it's deemed safe and all critical needs are met," said Battalion Chief John Salvate. "The partnership effort with Cal-Trans helps us return all firefighters to their communities sooner and ensures that their fire apparatus are safe for duty for their next assignment.

A digital photo is available upon request. Contact Caltrans Public Affairs for the photo.

#